

# H O K U S A I

Another Side  
of Genius

RONIN GALLERY









# Hokusai

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**RONIN GALLERY**

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## Another Side of Genius

As the sea curls and crests overhead, fishing boats float in the shadow. The fishermen bow before the wave, preparing for the impending crash of water. Even snow-tipped Mt. Fuji appears small beside the power of the sea. Though one may not know the artist Hokusai, the rolling blues and white crests are exceedingly familiar. From murals in London to postage stamps in Japan, Hokusai's "Great Wave" (*Under the Wave off Kanagawa*) is one of the most recognizable works in the history of art. In its ubiquity, the image has become a shorthand for many things—not only for Japanese art or Japan, but also more abstractly, as an unstoppable force, a crashing cultural wave. But what is overlooked in the shadow of the wave?

Over the course of his career, Hokusai designed over 3000 prints and used more than 30 *go* (artist names).<sup>1</sup> While the name Hokusai evokes iconic designs—the white crest of the Great Wave, the crack of lightning beneath the summit of Mt. Fuji—his genius extends far beyond a few masterpieces: It is a continuous thread uniting his oeuvre. Distinguished by an unerring sense of line, color, and inventive composition, Hokusai's prints captured Edo-period life and culture with unfaltering creativity. Incorporating new pigments into his daring designs, Hokusai invigorated the familiar and brought to life the imagined. From early *surimono* and *ehon* to his revolutionary landscapes of the 1830s, his printed works are marked by an enduring excellence that continues to surprise, delight, and inspire audiences worldwide.



Hokusai. *Under the Wave Off Kanagawa* (aka *the Great Wave*) from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji*. c. 1832. Woodblock print.



Hokusai. *Thunderstorm Beneath the Summit* (aka *Fuji in Lightning*) from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji*. c. 1832. Woodblock print.

1. Andreas Marks, *Hokusai: 36 Views of Mt. Fuji* (Taschen, 2021), 7. Matthi Forrer, *Hokusai* (Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1991), 11.



While in recent years major exhibitions have explored Hokusai's painting and sketches, *Another Side of Genius* focuses on Hokusai's genius in print. Composed of major series, illustrated books, *shunga*, and surimono, this exhibition looks beyond the iconic to celebrate the breadth of his talent. The exhibition places special emphasis on the 1830s, his most prolific era as a print designer, with more than 40 works from *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji*, *A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces*, *Remarkable Views of Famous Bridges in Various Provinces*, and *One Hundred Poems Explained by the Nurse*. Though Hokusai's most famous designs have become embedded in popular culture, the extent of his impact stems from another side of genius—not a brief and blinding flash, but a steady, radiating brilliance.

## FIRST SPARKS: EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

Born Kawamura Tokitaro in 1760, Hokusai began his life in the working-class Honjo district of Edo, Japan's cultural capital during the Edo period (1603-1868). Located on the east bank of the Sumida River, this neighborhood is known today as the Sumida Ward. He was adopted by his uncle Nakajima Ise, a mirror maker in the service of Shogun Tokugawa Ieharu.<sup>2</sup> This proximity to the shogunate likely granted Hokusai a formal education which would have begun at age six and spanned from reading and writing to the study of Chinese classics. Though his uncle's position offered a potential career path for the young artist, Hokusai's interests led him in a different direction. As a teenager he assumed the name Nakajima Tetsuzo and took his first steps towards the world of print. He worked as a delivery boy for a book rental shop for a time, surrounding himself with the *ehon* (illustrated books) of leading authors and illustrators. By the age of 14, he plunged deeper into the field, trying his own hand at carving woodblocks as the apprentice to an engraver. Around 1779, Hokusai formally pursued his artistic education through the workshop of the preeminent *ukiyo-e* master of actor portraiture, Katsukawa Shunsho (1726-1792).

As a member of the Katsukawa School, Hokusai worked in the style and preferred subjects of the school using the name "Shunro." Within a year, he had designed a variety of actor portraits and illustrated his first book—the first of many to come.<sup>3</sup> Though Hokusai's talent shined bright, his relationships within the school dimmed. He bristled at the conventions of the workshop, and consequently, his superiors. Hokusai's experimentation across genres and styles sparked regular clashes with Shunsho and others. In one account, Shunko, a senior student of Shunsho, tore up Hokusai's designs, warning that such "inferior works would damage Shunsho's reputation."<sup>4</sup> Though Hokusai later wrote that "he was greatly indebted to Shunko for his strict but proper guidance," his strained relationship with the Katsukawa School finally snapped in 1794.<sup>5</sup> Two years after Shunsho's death, Hokusai was expelled from the workshop and set out on his budding career as a largely independent artist.

## STRIKING OUT ON ONE'S OWN: WEAVING WORD AND IMAGE

Exiled from the Katsukawa School, Hokusai joined the workshop of the Tawaraya family. Until the third month of 1798, Hokusai worked under the name "Sori" and trained the young heir of the Tawaraya workshop.<sup>6</sup> As a new decade began, Hokusai's sense of confidence swelled and he adopted two new artist names: "Hokusai," as well as "Tokimasa."<sup>7</sup> Free of the limitations of the Katsukawa School, Hokusai established his fame over the next two decades—not only as a leading print designer, illustrator, and painter, but also as one of Edo's most interesting characters.

Embellished with gold, silver, bronze, mica, embossing and burnishing, surimono paired the art of woodblock printing with that of poetry. These deluxe, limited-edition prints were privately commissioned by Edo's active *kyōka-ren* (comic poetry associations)

2. Some sources say he was a mirror maker, others that he was a mirror polisher.

3. Sarah E. Thompson, *Hokusai* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2015), 16.

4. Welch, Matthew, et al. *Worldly Pleasures, Earthly Delights: Japanese Prints from the Minneapolis Institute of Arts*. Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2011, 95.

5. Welch, 95.

6. Thompson, 17.

7. Alfred Haft, "Hokusai and Late Tokugawa Society," in *Beyond the Great Wave*, ed. Timothy Clark (London: The British Museum/Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2017), 55.



and other wealthy patrons, typically on occasions such as the New Year or poetry competitions. Hokusai enjoyed plentiful demand for these lavish works as Edo enjoyed unprecedented prosperity in the 1810s and 1820s. Due to his popularity among poetry groups, Hokusai became enmeshed in the ranks of Edo's scholars, poets, and other literati. While his commissioned works built his reputation and provided a livelihood during this time, Hokusai also embraced the experimentation that he had been denied with the Katsukawa School. His explorations crossed representational styles and subjects, from genre scenes to early landscapes through his small-scale series *Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido* (c.1802-1804).

As an illustrator, Hokusai again thrived at the union of word and image through his full color *kyōka* (comic poetry) albums. Through ehon such as *Fine Views of the Eastern Capital at a Glance* (1800) he channeled the spirit of Edo into each image, holding up a mirror to the fashionable beauties, seasonal pleasures, and favorite pastimes of his readers. Though demand for his illustrations swelled among authors and publishers alike, Hokusai's printed ventures were not without tension. Hokusai's dedication to quality surely contributed to the mastery of his designs, however, his stringent standards led to high production costs for publishers and crackling tension with authors.<sup>8</sup> In the world of illustration, authors typically provided the artist with preparatory sketches intended to align with

the narrative. Hokusai openly disliked this practice and deferred to his own inspiration. His vigorous attention to detail extended to the mechanics of the printing as well. He was known to leave notes on the *hanshita-e*, the block-ready drawing given to the engraver, specifying the exact way in which an aspect of the design should be cut.<sup>9</sup> He even authored and illustrated some of his own *kibyōshi* (a form of popular fiction) published under the name Kako Tokitaro during this time.<sup>10</sup> In an 1818 letter, the famous author Takizawa Bakin wrote: "There is no one in Edo apart from Hokusai I would have do these drawings...[yet] even though I have long admired him, I've kept my distance..."<sup>11</sup>

While it was Hokusai's work that caught the eye of his contemporaries, his antics ensured that they could not look away. In 1804, Hokusai spread out paper roughly 200 square yards in size at Edo's Gokoku-ji Temple. He proceeded to outline a portrait of Daruma, not with a brush, but with a tool sized for the task—a broom. The performance lasted nearly until nightfall, with a final portrait so large it was said that a horse could pass through Daruma's mouth! News of Hokusai's live painting piqued even the interest of the shogun. Around 1807, Shogun Tokugawa Ienari honored Hokusai with an invitation for a painting performance at the palace. In one of his most dynamic displays, some stories tell he tore down a paper screen, covering it with swirling blue ink, while others say that he began with a stretch of blue fabric. However, all accounts agree about his next step. The artist grabbed an unassuming rooster from the yard, dipped its talons in brilliant red ink, and coaxed the startled bird across the paper. With a triumphant flourish, Hokusai announced the title of his composition: "Autumn Leaves on the Tatsuta River."<sup>12</sup> As the first decade of the 19th century ended, Hokusai had established himself as a leading painter, surimono designer, illustrator, and unforgettable character.

*“There is no one in Edo apart from Hokusai I would have do these drawings...[yet] even though I have long admired him, I’ve kept my distance...”*

8. Asano Shugo "Hokusai in Old Age: His Ideas, His Way" in *Beyond the Great Wave*, ed. Timothy Clark (London: The British Museum/Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2017), 41.

9. *ibid*, 45-46.

10. *ibid*, 40.

11. *ibid*, 47.

12. Keyes, "Hokusai: The Final Years" in *Beyond the Great Wave*, ed. Timothy Clark (London: The British Museum/Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2017), 7.



## EMBRACING THE NORTH STAR: BRILLIANCE AND BLIGHT

The name “Hokusai” means “north studio” where “north” alludes to the North Star and the bodhisattva Myoken. A devout follower of Nichiren Buddhism, Hokusai regularly made pilgrimages to Myoken Hall at Hossho-ji, a Nichiren temple near Edo.<sup>13</sup> One day in 1810, as Hokusai returned through a field from a 21-day vigil at a temple, he was struck by lightning.<sup>14</sup> He deeply believed that he survived by the grace of the North Star. The strike marked a turning point in his career. He withdrew from the cultured social circles of the literati and in 1812 left Edo for a year and lived between Osaka, Nagoya, and beyond.<sup>15</sup> When he returned to Edo the following year, he had assumed a new name for a new era: “Taito,” meaning “star blessed” or “receiving the north star.” The following decades were marked by profound professional success and frequent personal devastation.

From death and illness to famine and financial ruin, Hokusai’s later years were unsettled. In 1821, Hokusai lost a daughter, followed by his second wife in 1828. As he mourned, his derelict grandson caused another form of grief as he racked up gambling debts and familial shame. When Hokusai suffered a stroke in the mid-1820s, his daughter Eijo moved in with him to assist with paintings and print designs. A talented artist herself, Eijo worked under the artist name “Oi.” Perhaps it was her presence that fortified him, for by the late twenties Hokusai had dealt with his grandson.<sup>16</sup> As his familial struggles settled, the mid-1830s brought the Tenpo famine. Hokusai moved to Uraga between c.1834 and 1836, likely to avoid the food shortages in the city.<sup>17</sup> During this time he is said to have supported himself with hastily made albums of his paintings.<sup>18</sup>

While Hokusai’s personal life was filled with strife, his professional life enjoyed a new beginning. When he turned 60 in 1820, Hokusai marked the beginning of a new sexagenary with a new name: “iitsu” or “one again.” As his fame flourished as a painter, he entered the most prolific period of his career as an illustrator and print designer.

From sketches to masterpiece series such as *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji*, Hokusai was possessed by the desire to capture the essence of the world around him. Nowhere was this passion more evident than in his *Hokusai Manga*. First published in 1814, this *edehon* (picture manual) explored the spectrum of daily life with a spontaneous and sketch-like quality. Colophons to the *Manga* suggest that the volumes were not born of a planned project, but spontaneously conceived, composed of Hokusai’s impromptu sketches brought together by his students.<sup>19</sup> Published between 1814-1819, and 1834-1878, *Hokusai Manga* numbered a total of 15 volumes of these sketches and remains a major source of fame for the artist to this day.

As an illustrator, Hokusai also produced other brush drawing manuals during the 1810s and 20s. From animals and dancers to classical Chinese heroes, his drawing manuals demonstrated to his reader how to master his distinctive style. In 1834, Hokusai changed his name again, this time to “Manji” or “Everything,” reflecting his desire to capture every aspect of the world through his brush. That same year, he completed the first of his revered three-volume *One Hundred Views of Mt. Fuji* (1834-35, c.1849). From furling dragons to historical events, Hokusai’s imaginative capacity shines through each double-page illustration.

The 1830s were particularly significant for Hokusai as an ukiyo-e print designer. Through compositional brilliance, novel color, and tangible resonance with Edo-period life, Hokusai revolutionized the role of the landscape in ukiyo-e. With the release of *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji* (c.1830-1833) the landscape became a popular subject in its own right—not merely a background. While landscape painting was historically rooted in poetic imagination and artistic illusion, Hokusai’s *meisho-e*, or “famous place pictures,” featured familiar locations and the human rituals that surrounded them.<sup>20</sup> Though Hokusai had not necessarily visited all the locations himself, he relied on his imagination and accounts of other artists to evoke a sense of place. Each design invited the viewer to experience Mt. Fuji in a new way—at times a magnificent, towering presence, at

13. Angus Lockyer, “Hokusai’s Thought,” in *Beyond the Great Wave*, ed. Timothy Clark (London: The British Museum/Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2017), 29.

14. Roger Keyes, “Hokusai: The Final Years,” 7.

15. *ibid.*

16. *ibid.*, 11.

17. Haft, “Hokusai and Late Tokugawa Society,” 50. Many speculations have been made about Hokusai’s time in Uraga, though recent scholarship suggests that the move most likely stemmed from the famine.

18. Timothy Clark, “Late Hokusai,” in *Beyond the Great Wave*, ed. Timothy Clark (London: The British Museum/Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2017), 25-6.

19. Clark (ed.), *Beyond the Great Wave*, 261.



others a distant landmark embedded in the rhythms of daily life. At Hokusai's hand the landscape was not static, but ever fluctuating with the light, season, and weather.

As Hokusai redefined the landscape genre, he turned to innovative means to bring the natural world to life—both in composition and pigment. Hokusai energized his compositions through unexpected viewpoints and bold diagonals. He incorporated one-point perspective to create pictorial depth, drawing his audience deep into his landscapes. In color, Hokusai embraced the newly affordable imported pigment, Prussian blue.<sup>21</sup> This richly saturated pigment can be found throughout Hokusai's series from the 1830s, but took center stage in the earliest printings of the first designs from *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji*. Initially printed entirely in shades of blue, these *aizuri-e* (“blue-printed pictures”) were groundbreaking in technique, subject, and material. The immense success of *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji* sparked further landscape series such as *A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces* (c.1833-1834) and *Remarkable Views of Famous Bridges in Various Provinces* (c.1834), as well as the imagined landscapes of *Eight Views of the Ryukyu Islands* (c.1832). As public demand for *meisho-e* grew, other artists such as Hiroshige began to design within the genre. By the mid-1830s, *meisho-e* had become a major subject in *ukiyo-e*.

As the natural world thrived through his landscape series and *kacho-ga* (bird-and-flower pictures), Hokusai enlivened the realm of classical poetry. While his early career was steeped in the contemporary, comic verses of *kyōka*, his series such as *A True Mirror of Chinese and Japanese Poems* (c. 1833-34) and *One Hundred Poems Explained by the Nurse* (c.1835-36) looked to the classics from Japan and China, bringing compositional innovation and contemporary resonance to literary subject matter. In *A True Mirror*, he explored the strong verticality of the *nagaoban* (20.25” x 9”) format through winding roads and negative space. In *One Hundred Poems* Hokusai interpreted the 13th century poetry anthology *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets* in imagined landscapes present and past.

Hokusai grounds the narrative in the colloquial telling of a nurse rather than the voice of the original poet, weaving this classic anthology with contemporary imagination. Though Hokusai completed ninety-one designs for this series, only twenty-seven designs were published as Edo faced financial downturn in 1836.<sup>22</sup> The series marked Hokusai's final major series and a masterful end to a prolific era in print.

## THE MAN MAD WITH PAINTING

In 1839, a fire engulfed Hokusai's home. As volumes of books, paintings, and his orange-crate shrine to Nichiren burned with all his other worldly possessions, it is said that Hokusai could only grab his paint brushes as he fled. In the last years of his life, Hokusai dedicated himself to his painting, embracing the spirit of *gakyō* or “crazy to paint” that he included in his signatures. His days began and ended with a brush in hand. It is said that each morning he completed a brief painting of a lion dancer or Chinese lion, then threw it out the window. Known as his “daily exorcism drawings,” these were attempts to ward off evil.<sup>23</sup> From painted scrolls and albums, to screens and ceiling panels, he leaned into subjects resonant with his Nichiren Buddhist faith as he grew older. And though the sign in his window forcefully claimed, “no painted fans,” he did in fact leave some behind as well.<sup>24</sup>

As Hokusai entered the last decade of his life, he became fixated on the idea of reaching age one hundred and what it would mean for him as an artist. In the famous quote from the colophon of *One Hundred Views of Mt. Fuji* he writes: “until seventy, nothing I drew was worthy of notice...at 100 years I will have achieved a divine state in my art, and 110, every dot and every stroke will be as though alive.”<sup>25</sup> Convinced that age was the secret to greatness, he began to sign his age on his paintings, occasionally in his seventies and regularly in his eighties. It is said that on his deathbed, his final

20. Marks, *Hokusai: 36 Views of Mt. Fuji*, 8.

21. Sarah E. Thompson, *Hokusai* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2015), 21.

22. Keyes, *beyond*, 11.

23. Clark, “Late Hokusai,” 15.

24. *ibid*, 12.

25. Trans. Henry D. Smith II. *ibid*, 21.



words were a plea for just five more years to paint, for then he could work as a truly great artist.<sup>26</sup> Hokusai died in 1849. According to Iijima Kyoshin's 19th-century biography, Hokusai's funeral far exceeded his status: a procession of nearly 100 mourners, complete with samurai and their retainers, joined the artist on his journey to his final resting place at Seikyo-ji Temple.<sup>27</sup>

## BEYOND ONE HUNDRED

In the year of his death, Hokusai wrote "After I reach one hundred, my only desire will be to revolutionize the vocation. You gentleman who live long [enough] will know that my words are not wrong."<sup>28</sup> Hokusai never made it to one hundred, but his sentiment rings true. He not only revolutionized ukiyo-e and illustration in Edo-period Japan, but also sparked a powerful wave of inspiration that swept across centuries and seas, crashing upon artists, scholars, and collectors alike. From the powerful tide of Japonisme that entranced impressionists and post-impressionists in Europe and the United States, to contemporary echoes in photography, painting, and even advertising, Hokusai's work continues to wield a revelatory power in visual art.

While the "Great Wave" brought Hokusai ubiquity, it was his persistent spirit of exploration, innovation, and sensitivity to his world that built his revelatory legacy. Beyond the shadow of the "Wave," Hokusai's genius is enduring, interwoven throughout his career in delicate threads of word and image, vibrant brocades of landscape. While he may no longer wow the crowds with his creative antics or ruffle the feathers of publishers, he still manages to surprise and inspire. The spotlight is never far from Hokusai. Nearly two centuries after his death, the light has continued to shine on his work, his life, and his legacy. Like his iconic "Great Wave," Hokusai remains an unstoppable force teeming through ink and paper, through line and color.

26. Trans. Henry D. Smith II, 17.

27. Clark (ed.), *Beyond the Great Wave*, 270-271.

28. Clark, "Late Hokusai," 14.



# Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji

c. 1830-1833

At the beginning of 1831, advertisements for a “highly unusual” print series from the brush of Hokusai could be found in the back of Edo’s popular books. The ad extolled the novelty of the prints—both in their landscape subject matter and their all-blue coloring (*aizuri-e*)—and promised readers an ukiyo-e series like no other.<sup>29</sup> It did not disappoint. As Hokusai paired the beauty of nature with the intimacies of human life, *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji* brought the landscape print into its own, sparking an unprecedented public demand for *meisho-e*, or “famous place pictures.”

Today, the series continues to keep this promise. With its iconic designs and an unfaltering sense of composition, *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji* is widely considered Hokusai’s most influential series. This series includes three of Hokusai’s most famous designs: “South Wind, Clear Weather,” “Thunderstorm Beneath the Summit,” and the iconic “Under the Wave off Kanagawa.” While all three are undeniable masterpieces, the qualities that define their greatness are not confined to these three designs. From windswept travelers at Ejiri (pg. 12) to the tensed net of the fisherman at Kajikazawa (pg. 9), each work provides a new glimpse of Hokusai’s genius with each unique view of Mt. Fuji.

Published by Nishimuraya Yohachi (Eijudo) in the early 1830s, *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji* explores this sacred mountain as viewed from different locations and diverse perspectives. Hokusai had not visited each location himself, so he relied on his rich imagination

and the sketches of other artists—namely Kawamura Minsetsu’s *One Hundred Fujis* (1771)—to bring the landscape to life.<sup>30</sup> Mt. Fuji’s centrality ebbs and flows throughout *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji*, at times a sacred place viewed in reverence, at others, a familiar backdrop to daily life. Incorporating one-point perspective, Hokusai presents deep, inviting compositions. Bold diagonals lend a dynamism to each scene, directing the eye throughout the design. At the time of publication, Hokusai was already in his seventies and had spent years honing his sensitivity to the world around him, attempting to capture every aspect of life through his brush.

In 1830, the newly imported pigment Prussian blue captured the hearts of Edo. It remains unclear whether the publisher or Hokusai himself suggested the *aizuri-e* concept for the *Thirty-six Views*. In practice, only ten of the designs were printed as true *aizuri-e*, printed in only shades of indigo and the popular new pigment Prussian blue. As the vogue of this pigment faded, the following 31 designs increasingly incorporated other colors. The immense popularity of the series sparked an additional ten designs around 1833, known as “*ura-Fuji*” or “Fuji from the back.” These ten supplemental designs, as well as reprintings of the original 36 designs from this era, featured black key block impressions in lieu of the original blue.

29. Andreas Marks, *Hokusai: 36 Views of Mt. Fuji* (Taschen, 2021), 11.

30. *ibid*, 5.





*Kajikazawa in Kai Province*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1832  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 9.75" x 14.5"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JP-208576





*Lake Suwa in Shinano Province*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji

Date: c. 1831

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10.25" x 15"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JPR-5674-1





*Under Mannen Bridge at Fukagawa*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji

Date: c. 1832

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10" x 15"

Signature: Hokusai aratame Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JPR-37268-1





*Ejiri in Suruga Province*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1832  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 10" x 14.75"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JPR-208594

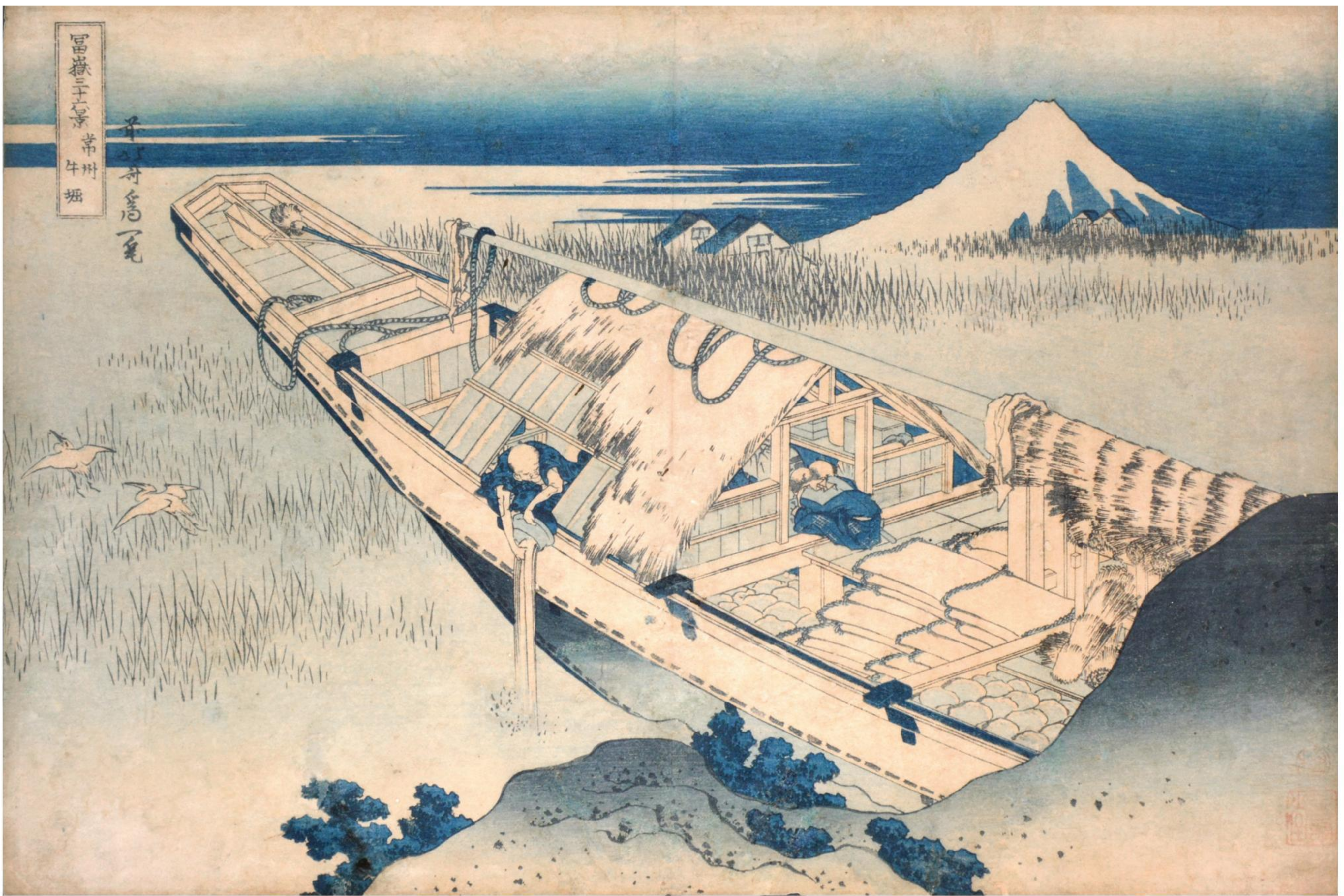




*Shichirigahama in Sagami Province*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1832  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 9.75" x 14.25"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Provenance: Raymond A. Bidwell  
 Reference No: JP-208688





*Ushibori in Hitachi Province*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1831  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 9.75" x 15.5"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JP-200064





*Inume Pass in Kai Province*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji

Date: c. 1832

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10" x 15.25"

Signature: Hokusai aratame iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JPR-5023-1





*The Cushion Pine at Aoyama*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji

Date: c. 1832

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10.25" x 15"

Signature: Hokusai aratame iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JPR-200063-1





*In the Mountains of Totomi Province*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1832  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 9.5" x 14.5"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JPR-63740-1





*Shimomeguro*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji

Date: c. 1832

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10.25" x 15.25"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-208700





*Tago Bay Near Ejiri on the Tokaido*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1832  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 10" x 14.5"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JPR-37123-1





*Waterwheel at Onden*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji

Date: c. 1832

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10.25" x 15"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JPR-86705-1





*Sazai Hall at Gohyakurakan (Five Hundred Arhats) Temple*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1832  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 9.5" x 14.5"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JPR-84192-1





*Senju in Musashi Province*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji

Date: c. 1832

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 9.75" x 14.75"

Signature: Hokusai aratame iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JPR-76767-1





*Yoshida on the Tokaido*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji

Date: c. 1832

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10" x 14.8"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-208573





*Snowy Morning in Koishikawa*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1832  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 9.75" x 14.25"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JPR-96482-1





*Mishima Pass in Kai Province*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1831  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 10" x 14.5"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JPR-63742-1





*Tsukudajima in Musashi Province*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1832  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 10" x 14.75"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Provenance: Ernest LeVeel  
 Reference No: JPR-111020-1





*Fuji Seen in the Distance from Senju Pleasure Quarter*

Series: Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji  
 Date: c. 1833  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 9.75" x 14.75"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JPR-108723-1



# A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces

c. 1833-1834

Hokusai's series *A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces* captures the spirit of each waterfall in strong vertical composition, balancing the power of nature with the routines of human life. The figures are small, engaged in quotidian activities beside these wonders of the natural world. From a casual picnic by Amida Falls to pilgrims' purification beneath Roben Waterfall, Hokusai connects these natural marvels with the human rituals that surround them.

Building upon the popularity of his first groundbreaking landscape series *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji* (c. 1830-1833), Hokusai worked once again with the publisher Nishimuraya Yohachi (Eijudo) to satisfy the public's demand for his mastery of composition and rich saturation of color. The printer achieved the rich blues that animate the waters of this series using both imported Prussian blue and the long-used pigment indigo. While Hokusai explored the shape and movement of water throughout his career, tumbling cascades and snaking currents become his central focus in *A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces*. In this eight-print series, Hokusai invites the armchair traveler on a journey to waterfalls real and imagined. Though Hokusai may have gleaned some designs from first-hand observations, it is more likely that he relied on the representations and travel accounts of others. Though the exact order of this series remains unknown, the series can be divided into two groups. Based on the script style, it has been suggested that four designs—Aoigaoka, Yoro, Kirifuri, and Kiyō—were published around the new year in 1833, while the remaining four—Ono, Uma-arai, Amida, and Roben—were released slightly later.<sup>31</sup>

31. Asano Shugo, *Beyond the Great Wave*, 142.





*Yoro Waterfall in Mino Province*

Series: A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces

Date: c. 1833

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 15" x 10"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-208844





*The Amida Falls in the Far Reaches of the Kisokaido*

Series: A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces

Date: c. 1833

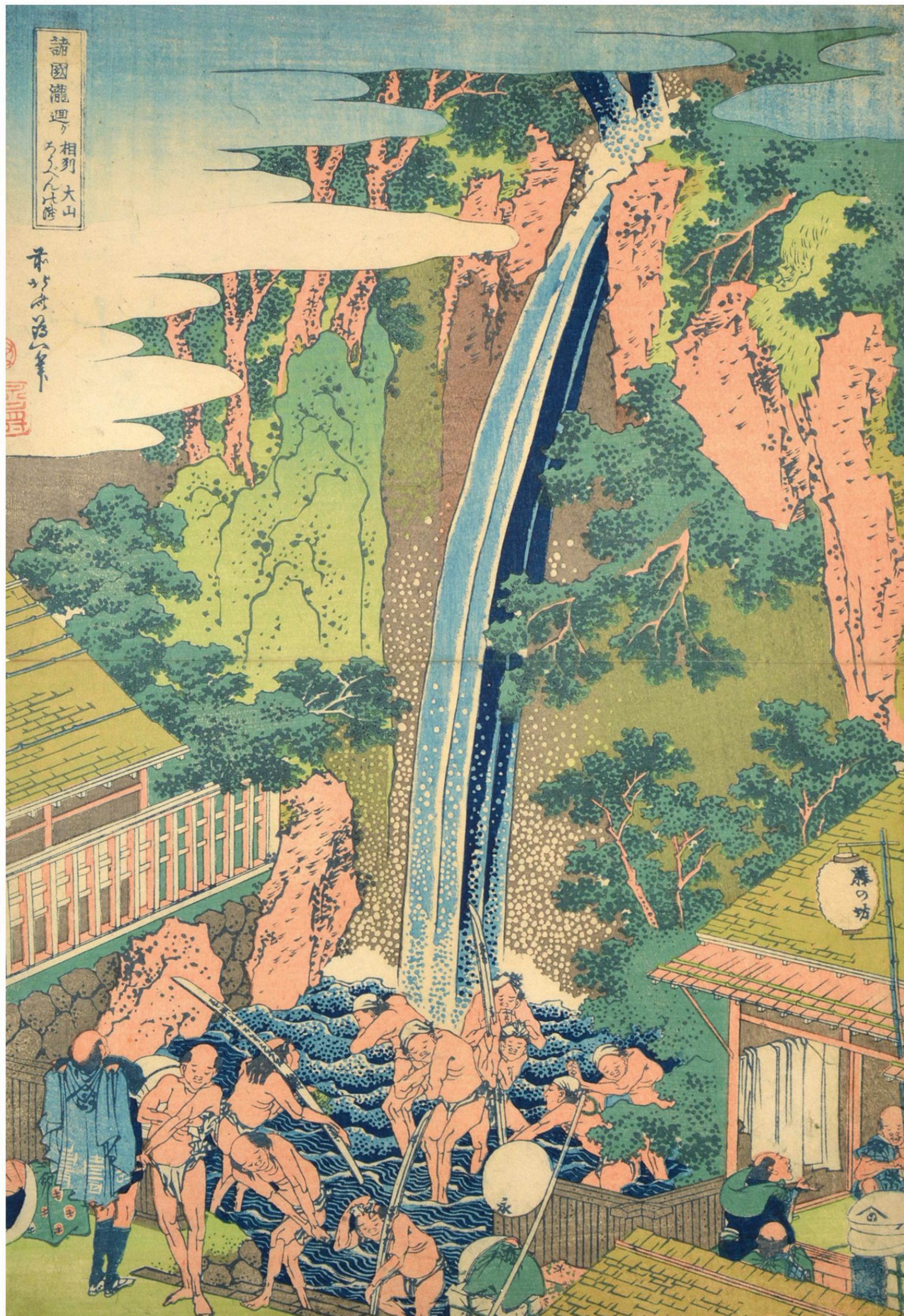
Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 15" x 10.25"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-208843





*Roben Waterfall at Oyama in Sagami Province*

Series: A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces

Date: c. 1833

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 14.5" x 10"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-101019





*Yoshitsune's Horse-washing Falls at Yoshino in Yamato Province*

Series: A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces  
 Date: c. 1833  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 14" x 9.5"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JP-208842





*The Waterfall at Ono on the Kisokaido*

Series: A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces

Date: c. 1833

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 15" x 10"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Provenance: Raymond A. Bidwell

Reference No: JP-208687





*Kirifuri Waterfall at Mt. Kurokami in Shimotsuke Province*

Series: A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces

Date: c. 1833

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 15.25" x 10.25"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-209025





*Aoigaoka Waterfall, Edo*

Series: A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces

Date: c. 1833

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 15" x 10.25"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-209026



# Eight Views of the Ryukyu Islands

c. 1832

Today, the Ryukyu Islands belong to Japan's southern Okinawa Prefecture and Kagoshima Prefecture. However, from the 17th through mid-19th century, this string of islands from modern Okinawa Island to Yonaguni was the semi-independent Ryukyu Kingdom. As a vassal state to both Japan's southern Satsuma Domain in Kyushu and the Chinese empire, the kingdom held political significance. In 1832, a public fascination in the kingdom blossomed when a diplomatic delegation from the islands traveled to Edo to meet with the shogun. More than one hundred Ryukyuans processed through the streets in unfamiliar clothing to the sound of unfamiliar music on their way to Edo, piquing public interest. Hokusai answered the growing curiosity about the delegation and their homeland through the series *Eight Views of the Ryukyu Islands*, published by Moriya Jihei (Kinshindo) in 1832.

While many images of the procession were produced during this time, Hokusai looked beyond the observed to compose a series of single-sheet landscape prints depicting the Ryukyu Kingdom itself. As Hokusai never traveled to the islands, he found inspiration in the designs of Xu Baoguang. The 18th-century Chinese diplomat was so taken by the beauty of the Ryukuan landscape that he composed eight poems with accompanying illustrations about eight sites around the port city of Naha in 1719. These illustrations were included in Zhou Huang's *Abridged History of the Land of Ryukyu* (1757), which arrived in Japan just before the 1832 diplomatic mission. Building upon the template of this 18th-century Chinese account, Hokusai's visions of the Ryukyu Islands rest firmly in the realm of the imagined, reflecting more about the popular imagination of Edo than the kingdom itself.<sup>32</sup>

# Remarkable Views of Famous Bridges in Various Provinces

c. 1834

Following the success of Hokusai's earlier landscape series, the publisher Nishimuraya Yohachi (Eijudo) commissioned *Remarkable Views of Famous Bridges in Various Provinces*. As the series totals eleven designs, it appears that either one design was never realized or that the popularity of the series sparked a bonus design.<sup>33</sup> As with Hokusai's other landscape series from the 1830s, the *Bridges* series generously employs Prussian blue, lending depth to the water and sky. The series presents a mix of real and fanatical bridges. In "Drum Bridge at Kameido Tenjin Shrine," Hokusai portrays a recognizable bridge in Edo with tangible materiality. Likely inspired by Chinese "moon bridges," the drum bridge got its name from the full circle formed when it reflected in the water. As Hokusai places the viewer hovering above the roofs on the right bank, this vantage point

highlights both the dramatic curvature of the bridge's namesake and the structural elements that made it possible. As shrine visitors cross overhead, the viewer can see the details of the bridges construction just beneath their feet.

In "Old View of the Boat-bridge at Sano in Kozuke," the line between imagination and reality blurs. As evening falls on the snow-covered landscape, the current rocks the floating structure, breaking into white spray against bow and stern. Though boat bridges—constructed by attaching planks to connected lines of boats—were not uncommon in Japan, the bridge named in the print's title likely owes more to poetic allusion than observation.<sup>34</sup>

32. Travis Seifman, "Hokusai's 'Eight Views of Ryukyu': Islands of Imagination," *Andon*, 106 (2018): 26-40.

33. Clark (ed.), *Beyond the Great Wave*, 154.

34. *ibid*, 159.





*Banana Garden at Nakashima*

Series: Eight Views of the Ryukyu Islands

Date: c. 1832

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10" x 15.25"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-111212





*Drum Bridge at Kameido Tenjin Shrine*

Series: Remarkable Views of Famous Bridges in Various Provinces

Date: c. 1834

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 9.75" x 14.25"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP1-73745





*Old View of the Boat-bridge at Sano in Kozuke Province*

Series: Remarkable Views of Famous Bridges in Various Provinces

Date: c. 1834

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 9.75" x 14.25"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-208841



# A True Mirror of Chinese and Japanese Poems

c. 1833

Published by Moriya Jihei (Kinshindo) around 1833, Hokusai's *A True Mirror of Chinese and Japanese Poems* interprets classical poems in the rare *nagaoban* (20.25" x 9") format. This long, pictorial space recalls that of a scroll painting—perhaps an appropriate format given the classical subject matter. It has been suggested that Hokusai found inspiration for the series in the anthology *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing* (1013), which paired Chinese and Japanese poems of similar subjects.<sup>35</sup> *A True Mirror* numbers ten designs, six depicting Japanese poets and four of Chinese poets. As the poems are not included in the images, the series relied on public familiarity with the verses in question—a fair assumption, given the prominence of classical literature at the time.

As Hokusai imagines each poem, he explores the strong verticality of the *nagaoban* format. Through the design “Gathering Rushes” Hokusai transforms Minamoto Nakamasa's atmospheric verse about the autumn moon into a lush landscape. Water rolls beneath the bridge as the elderly cutter—laden with a day's work of rushes—wistfully thinks of his long-lost son in the gentle moonlight. Through “Young Man Setting Out” Hokusai turns to a Chinese poem by the Han dynasty poet Cui Guofu. The verse tells of a vibrant young man who, having left his horse crop with his lover, pulls down a willow branch to motivate his horse. While “Young Man Setting Out” and “Gathering Rushes” draw the eye into lush landscapes, “Sei Shonagon” denies the viewer entry into the

composition. In this design, Hokusai conveys this 11th-century Japanese poet's adamant spirit as she refuses the intentions of a suitor. Her poem alludes to a Chinese tale in which a lord's retainers trick the roosters into crowing in order to open a locked gate. As Sei Shonagon tells her suitor that she will not fall for such trickery, Hokusai portrays the Chinese retainers before an insurmountable barrier. With a rooster poised in the lower right, Hokusai assures the viewer that the bird will not be tricked to crow this time—the gate to Sei Shonagon's heart will remain closed.

35. Clark (ed.), *Beyond the Great Wave*, 212.



*Gathering Rushes*

Series: A True Mirror of Chinese and Japanese Poems  
 Date: c. 1833  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 19.75" x 9"  
 Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu  
 Reference No: JP-208535







*Sei Shonagon*

Series: A True Mirror of Chinese and Japanese Poems

Date: c. 1833

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 20" x 9"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-208845



*Young Man Setting Out*

Series: A True Mirror of Chinese and Japanese Poems

Date: c. 1833

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 19.5" x 9"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JP-208846





# One Hundred Poems Explained by the Nurse

c. 1835-1836

In his final major print series, Hokusai turned to the popular anthology *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*. Compiled around 1235 by the poet and courtier Fujiwara no Teika, the anthology includes selected poems of the Japanese imperial court dating from the 7th century through the 13th century. As the popularity of the anthology spread far beyond court life, it became one of the most influential collections of classical Japanese poetry. By the Edo period, its verses were woven into popular culture. While widely memorized and integrated into common games, the poems had yet to be interpreted as a comprehensive print series. Hokusai rose to the challenge—possibly inspired by a commission intended for his daughter Eijo.

Through *One Hundred Poems as Explained by the Nurse*, Hokusai brought the anthology to life, layering his mastery of landscape, poetic allusion, and contemporary resonance. Like his other major series of the 1830s, this series is distinguished by its rich color and brilliant composition. In each design, the poem can be found enclosed within the cartouche. However, rather than illustrate the poems from the point of view of the poet, Hokusai shaped a more colloquial narrative through the voice of an elderly nurse. The series presents 13 poems set in the classical past, while the remainder weave poetic allusion into scenes of 19th-century life.<sup>36</sup> At times, Hokusai integrates elements of humor, as found in “Poem by Funya no Asayasu.” (pg. 46) As the verse refers to dewdrops scattering in the wind, Hokusai emphasizes the power of the wind through the

two men at the rear of the boat. Poles gripped and bodies tensed, they do their best to keep the boat itself from scattering at the whims of the wind. While in “Poem by Fujiwara no Yoshitaka,” Hokusai sets this poem of burning desire and satisfaction in a contemporary bathhouse. The poem reads: “I always thought/ I would give my life/ to meet you only once,/ but now, having spent a night/ with you, I wish that I may/ go on living forever.”<sup>37</sup> Amidst ribbons of steam, a pair of women, perhaps courtesans, readjust their hairpins, looking out at the view. As men lounge on the veranda and soak in the tub, Hokusai creates a portrait of satisfaction that no one would be quick to leave.

Unfortunately, Hokusai’s final series was never finished. Though he completed 91 designs for the *One Hundred Poems*, only 27 came to fruition. Nishimuraya Yohachi (Eijudo) published the first five designs in c. 1835 before filing for bankruptcy. The series resumed under a new publisher, Iseya Sanjiro (Iseri), who published 22 additional designs before he also succumbed to the financial pressure brought on by the Tenpo famine.<sup>38</sup> Of the unrealized designs, more than 60 of the *hanshita-e* (block-ready drawings) can be found in museums worldwide.<sup>39</sup> Even incomplete, *One Hundred Poems as Explained by the Nurse* remains one of Hokusai’s most important series and a significant capstone to his most prolific era as a printmaker. In the years that followed, he devoted himself to his career as a painter.

36. Clark, “Late Hokusai,” in *Beyond the Great Wave*, ed. Timothy Clark (London: The British Museum/Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2017), 24.

37. Peter McMillan, *One Hundred Poets, One Poem Each* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010 (1st ed. 2008)).

38. Though Iseri published the later designs, they used the Eijudo seal. Keyes, “Hokusai: The Final Years” in *Beyond the Great Wave*, ed. Timothy Clark (London: The British Museum/Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2017), 11.

39. *ibid*, 11.





*Poem by Ise*

Series: One Hundred Poems Explained by the Nurse

Date: c. 1836

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10" x 14.5"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Manji

Provenance: Sakai

Reference No: JP-207886





*Poem by Funya no Asayasu*

Series: One Hundred Poems Explained by the Nurse

Date: c. 1836

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 9.75" x 14.25"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Manji

Reference No: JP-208847





*Poem by the Priest Henjo*

Series: One Hundred Poems Explained by the Nurse

Date: c. 1836

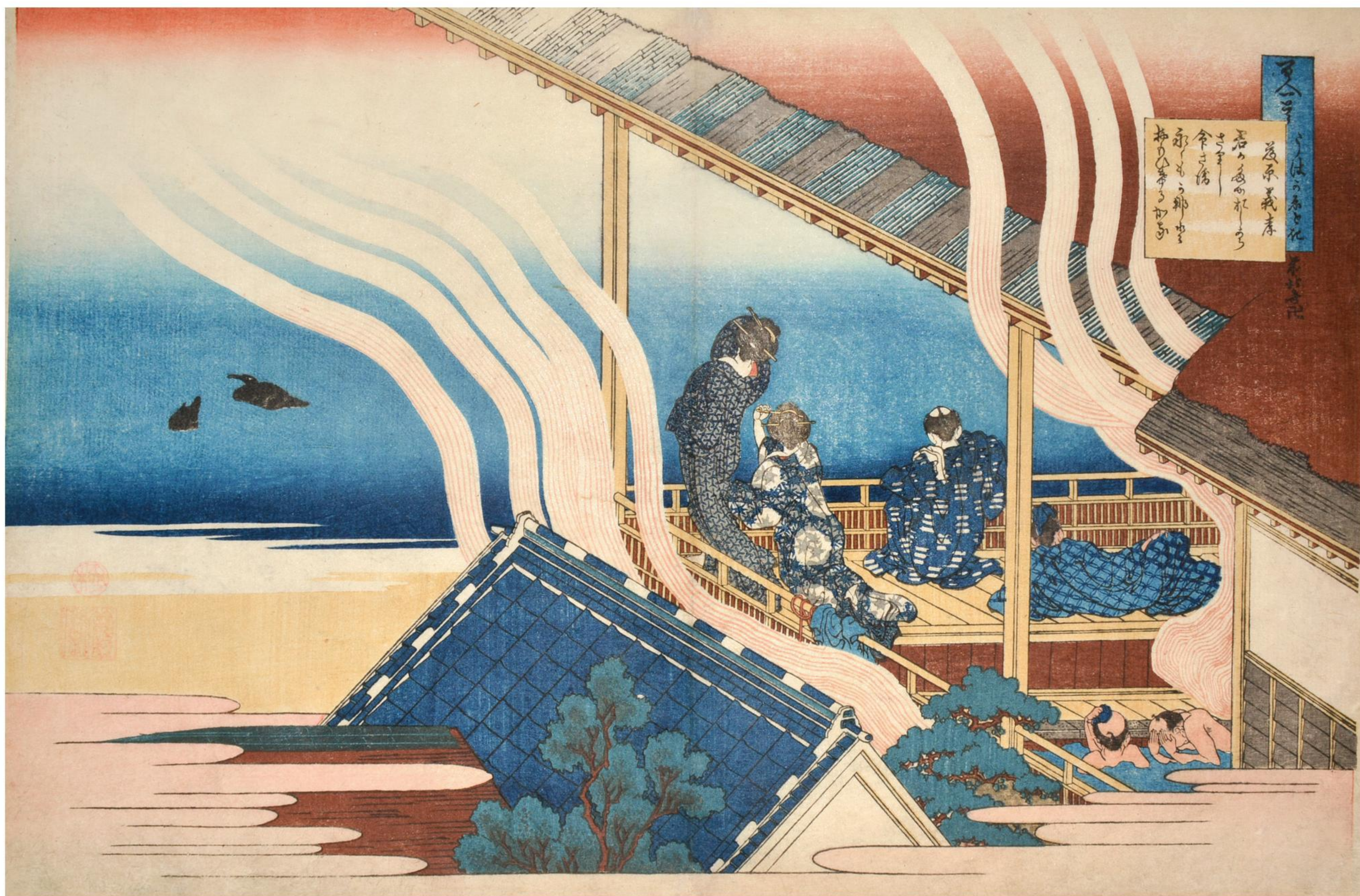
Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10" x 14.5"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Manji

Reference No: JP1-23322





*Poem by Fujiwara no Yoshitaka*

Series: One Hundred Poems Explained by the Nurse

Date: c. 1836

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10" x 15"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Manji

Reference No: JP1-71921





*Poem by Fujiwara no Toshiyuki Ason*

Series: One Hundred Poems Explained by the Nurse

Date: c. 1836

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 9.75" x 14.25"

Signature: Saki no Hokusai Manji

Provenance: Sakai

Reference No: JP-207888



## Shunga

*Shunga*, or “spring pictures,” capture a vast spectrum of sensual pleasures. From the passionate reunions of lovers to the excitement of clandestine affairs, these erotic prints satisfy a wide range of interests. Nearly all ukiyo-e artists produced shunga, though these works are often unsigned. Hokusai was no exception. In Hokusai’s albums such as *Models for Loving Couples* (c.1812-1814), amorous couples share private moments in striking color and textured line, their whispered conversations captured in the text. Released as illustrated books, single-sheet prints or *enpon*—albums containing 12 images, usually progressing from the subtly suggestive to the strikingly explicit—shunga could be purchased from book vendors or borrowed from lending libraries. Though these erotic prints could serve an educational or inspirational purpose, the genre did not operate in the realm of reality. These prints promoted the realm of fantasy, serving more as a source of titillation and entertainment.









*A Cat, Two Mice, and Two Lovers*

Series: Models for Loving Couples (Tsui no Hinagata)  
 Date: c. 1812  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 9.75" x 14.5"  
 Provenance: Kronhausen  
 Reference No: JP-208833





*Cherry Blossom Viewing Day*

Date: c. 1820

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10" x 14.75"

Reference No: JP-110934



## Surimono and Early Poetry Prints

Hokusai established himself as a leading *surimono* designer of the early 19th century. Surimono blend the rich visual imagery of ukiyo-e with the ethereal art of poetry. During the Edo period, poetry societies and prosperous patrons commissioned these deluxe, limited-edition prints to mark special occasions such as the New Year or poetry competitions. Printed on the finest paper, these works were often inscribed with a light verse or clever aphorism and lavishly embellished with gold, silver, bronze, mica, embossing and burnishing. While popular *kyōka* (comic poetry) verses were common, other classical poems could be found on surimono as well. These privately commissioned works were produced in limited editions, and often in small sizes. Weaving word and image, these works were laden with visual puns, poetic allusion, and even hidden calendars. Hokusai's early exploration of landscape, *Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido*, was first released in 1802 with *kyōka* poems paired to each station, then without the poems in 1804.





*Puppeteer Holding a Puppet on a Go Board*

Date: c. 1820

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 8" x 7.25"

Signature: Hokusai aratame Katsushika Iitsu hitsu

Reference No: JPR-208425





*Two Women Playing a Board Game*

Date: 1805  
Medium: Woodblock print  
Size: 5.25" x 7.25"  
Signature: Kukushin Hokusai ga  
Reference No: JP1-26693



*Willow Tree on the Sumida River*

Date: c. 1798  
Medium: Woodblock print  
Size: 5" x 6.75"  
Signature: Sori Hokusai ga  
Provenance: Hayashi  
Reference No: JP1-26690







*Bamboo Grove*

Date: c. 1810

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 7.75" x 6.75"

Signature: Katsushika Hokusai ga

Provenance: Hayashi

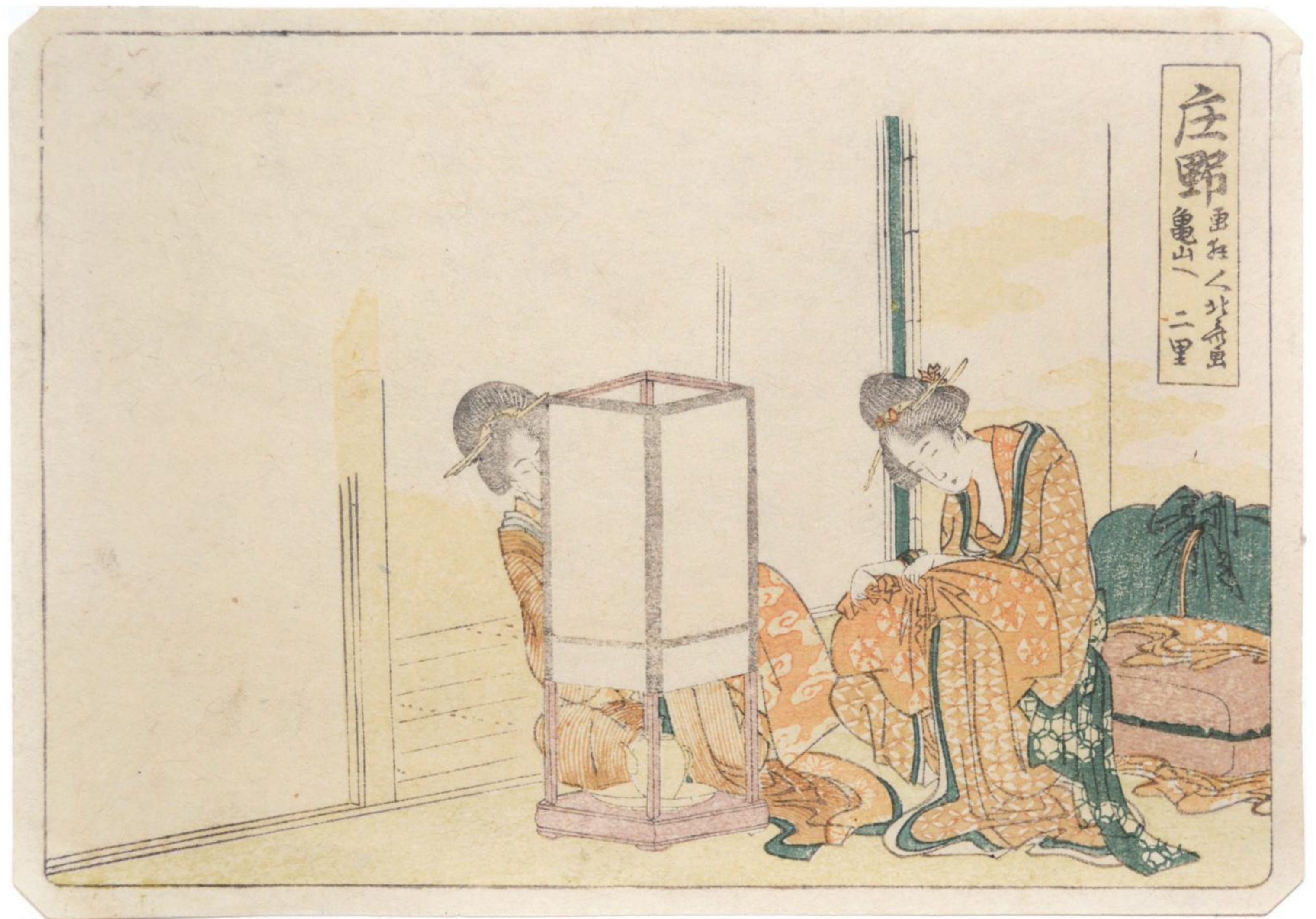
Reference No: JP5490





*Shono*

Series: Fifty-three Stations  
of the Tokaido  
Date: 1804  
Medium: Woodblock print  
Size: 4.75" x 7"  
Signature: Gakyojin Hokusai ga  
Reference No: JP1-37275



*Mitsuke*

Series: Fifty-three Stations  
of the Tokaido  
Date: 1804  
Medium: Woodblock print  
Size: 5" x 7"  
Signature: Gakyojin Hokusai ga  
Reference No: JP1-37277







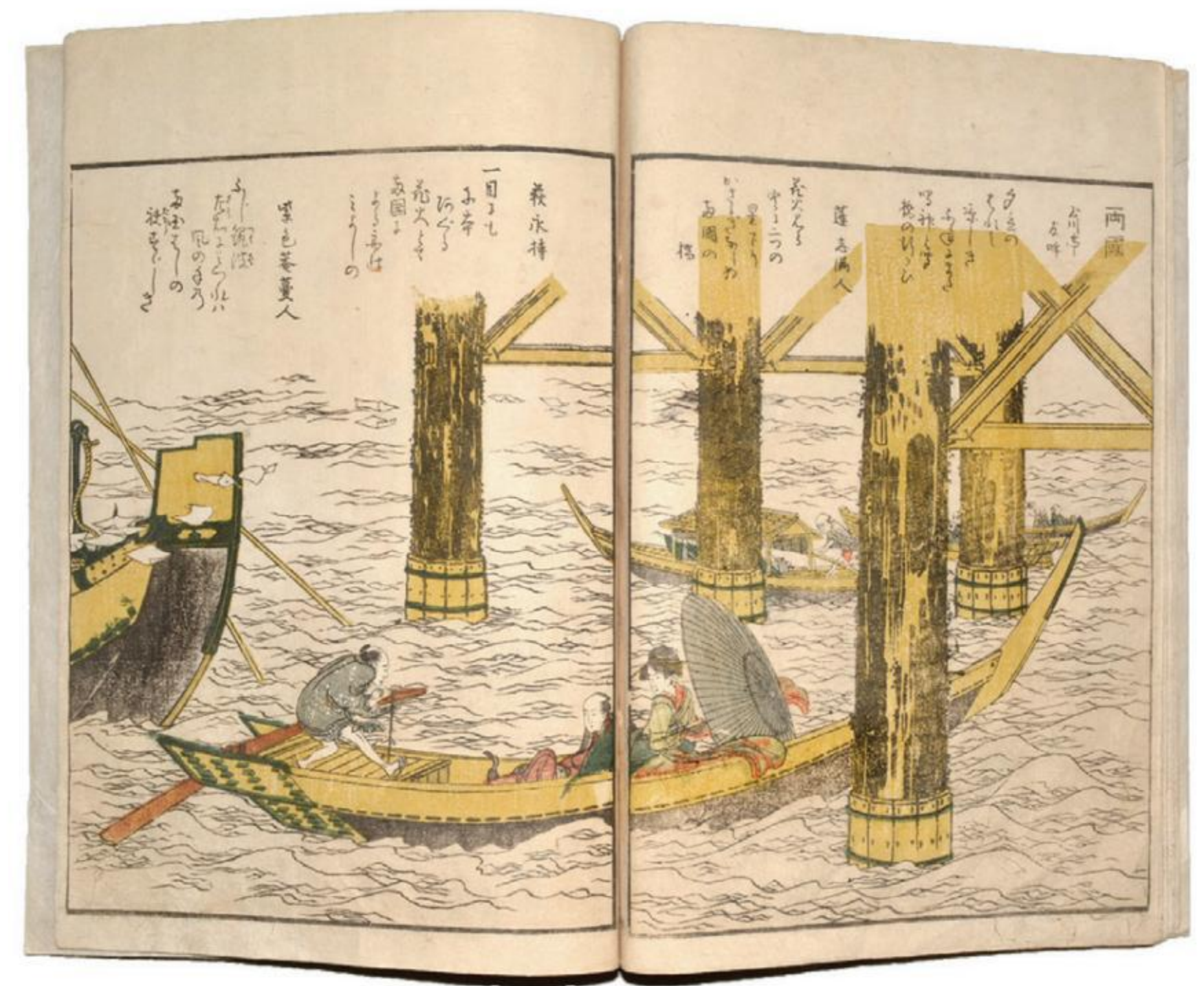
## Fine Views of the Eastern Capital at a Glance

*Toto Shokei Ichiran*

Originally published by Tsutaya Juzaburo (Koshodo) in 1800, this two-volume *kyōka* (comic poem) album pairs poetry with Hokusai's full-color double-page illustrations. As Hokusai ties word to image, the famous sites of Edo come to life through elegant courtesans and popular actors. In one view, Hokusai places the viewer on stage, watching a kabuki play from behind the actors' backs, looking out on the packed audience. Another ventures into the Yoshiwara, Edo's legalized prostitution district, depicting three high-ranking courtesans in all their finery. Between seasons and neighborhoods, Hokusai captures the vibrant culture of Edo's floating world. *Fine Views of the Eastern Capital at a Glance* includes a total of 19 double-page illustrations, 1 single-page illustration, and a 3-page preface in volume one.







Date: 1816 (first published in 1800)  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 10" x 7"  
 Volumes: 2  
 Publisher: Hishiya Kinbei  
 Edition: Originally published in 1800 as *Toto Meisho Ichiran*, then republished as *Toto Shokei Ichiran* in 1816 by Hishiya Kinbei.  
 Reference No: JPR-111562

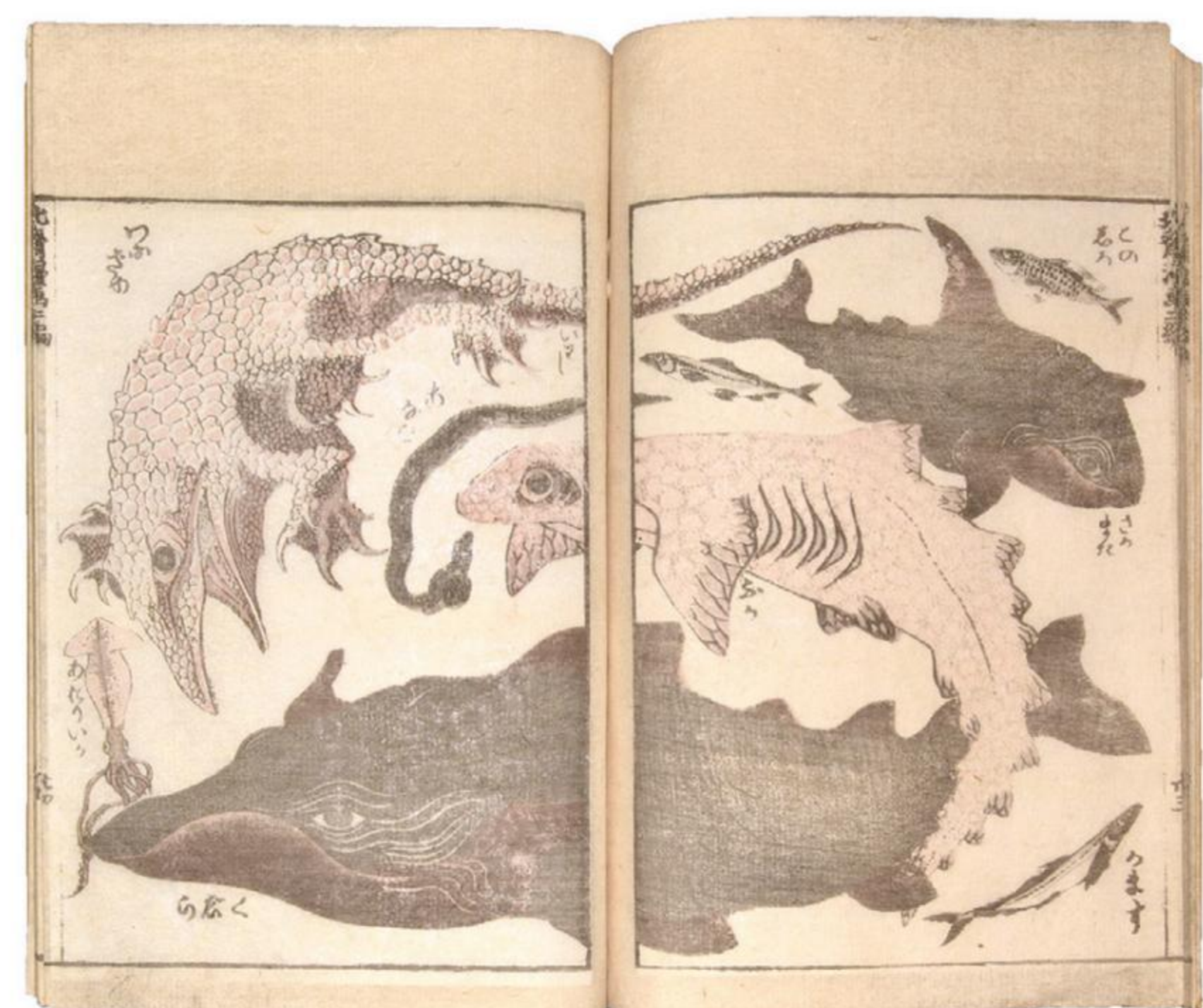
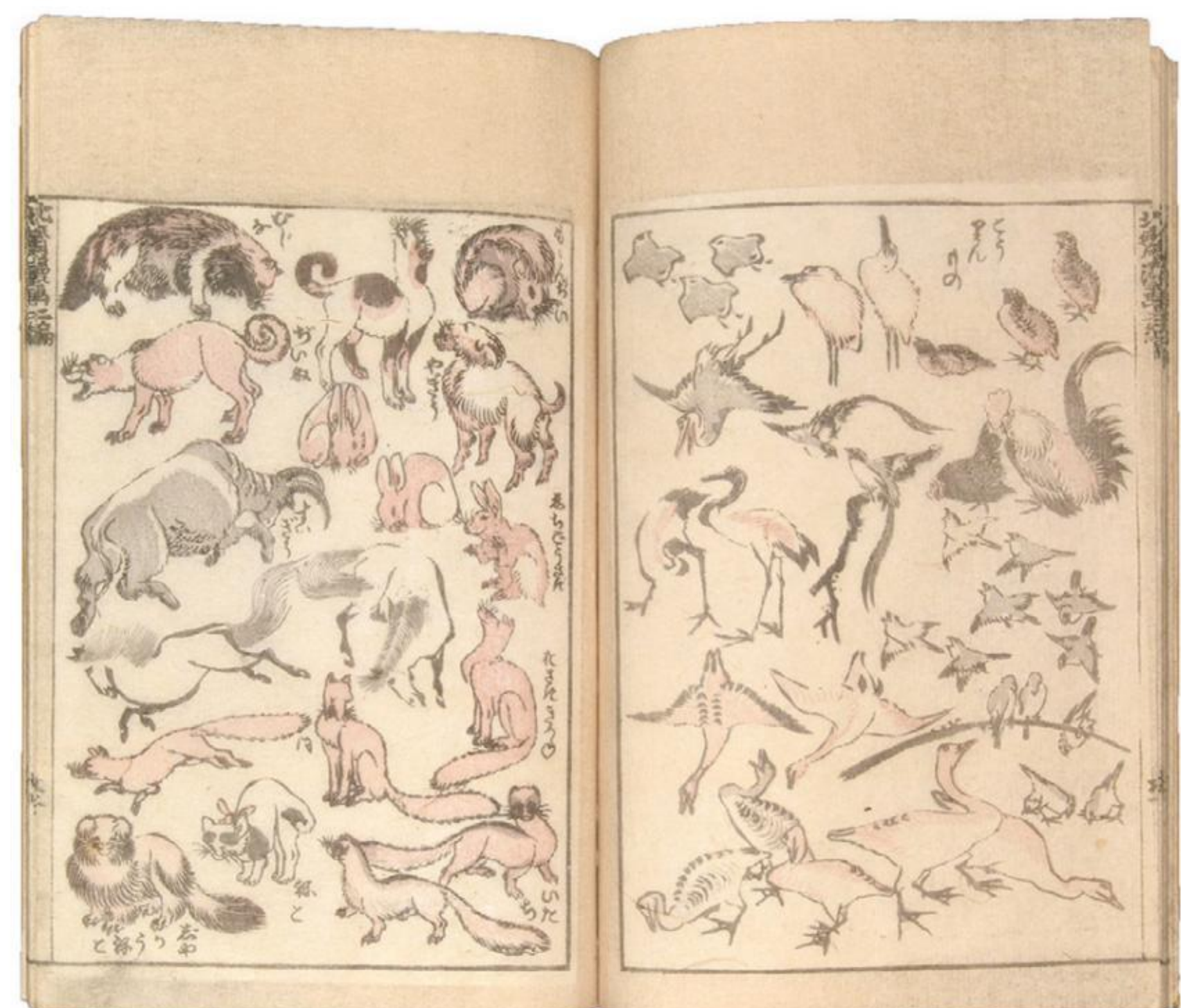




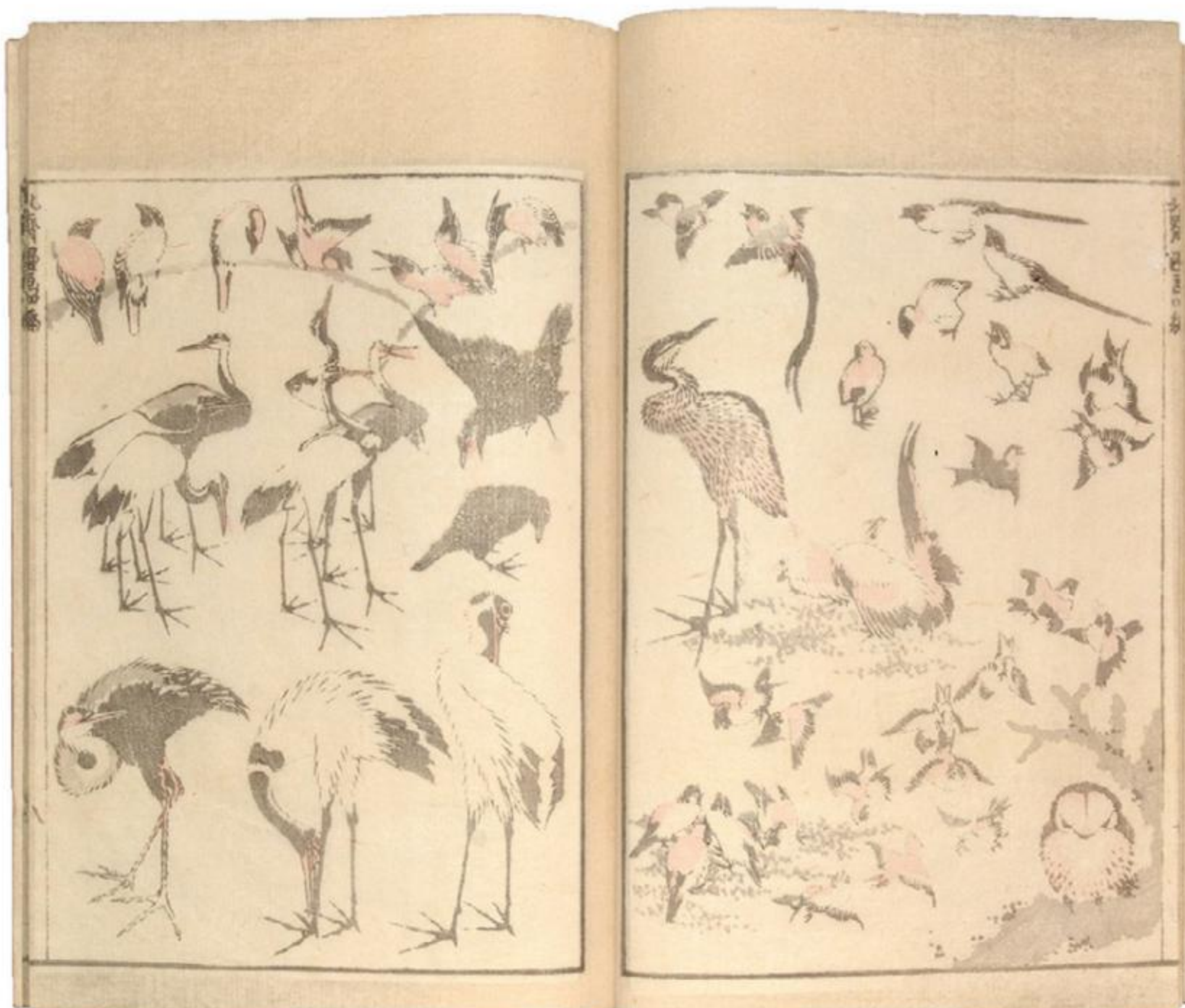
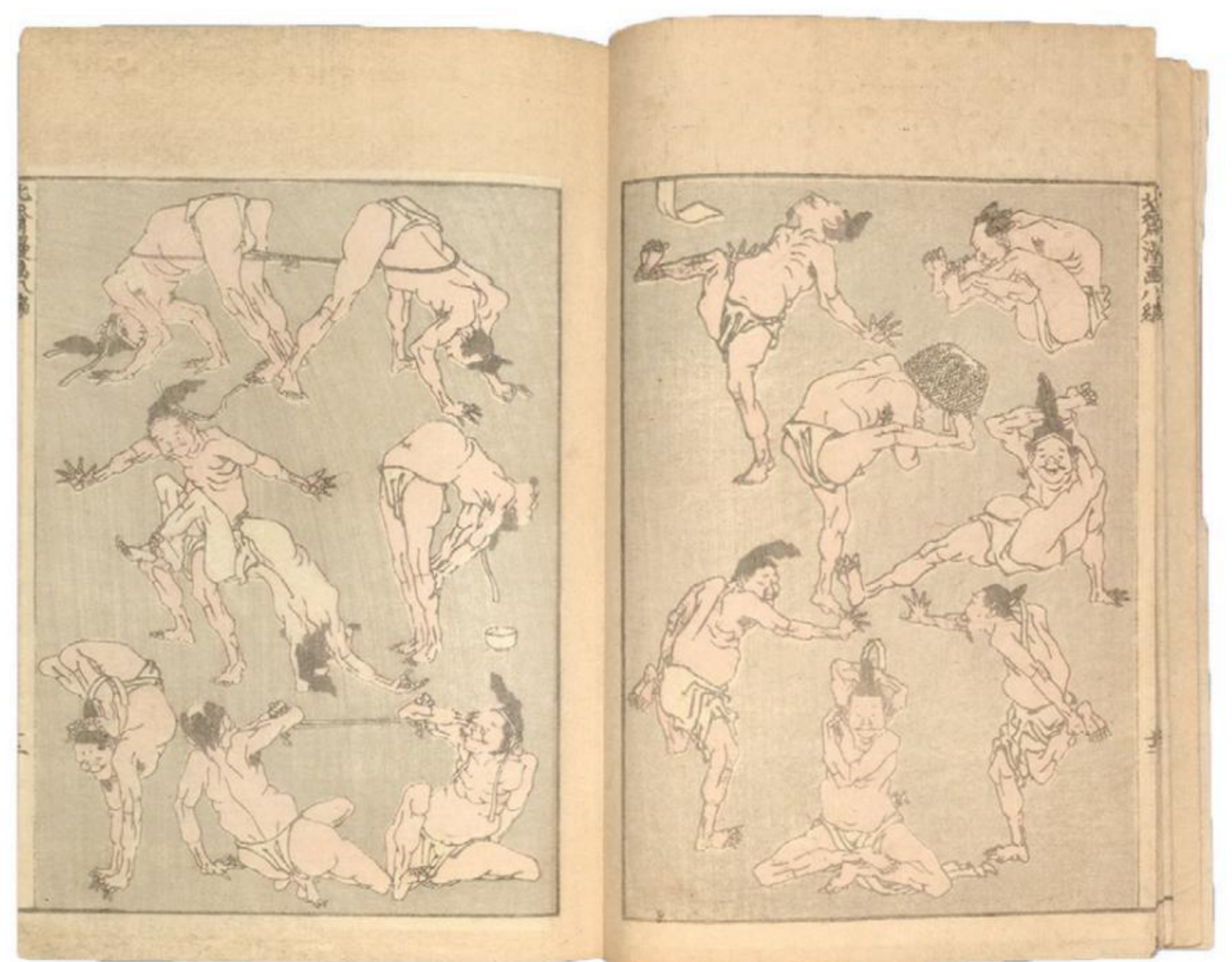
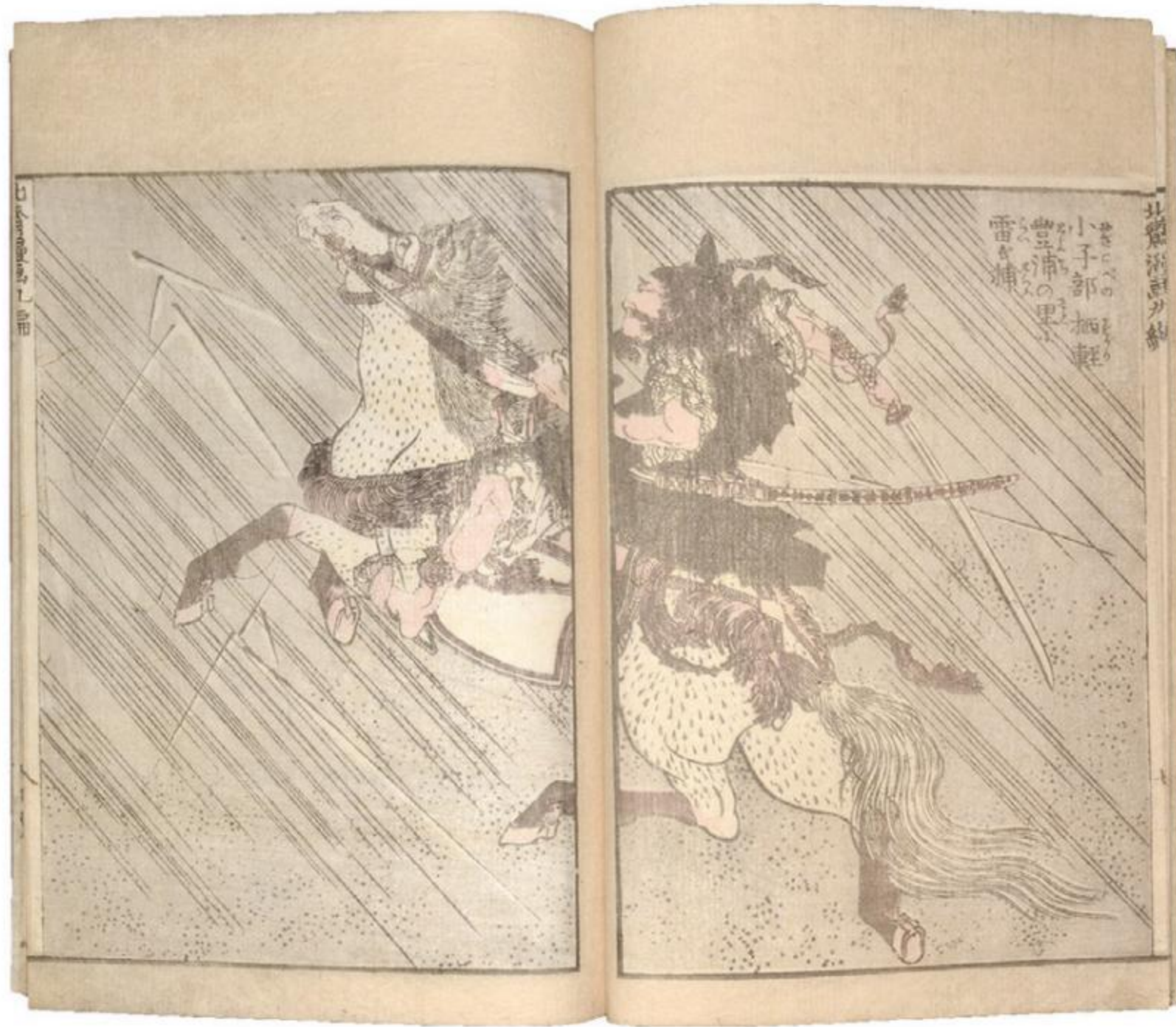
## Hokusai Manga

*Hokusai Manga* reflects page after page of Hokusai's insatiable desire to understand the world through his brush. In this context, the term *manga* refers to rough sketches. As indicated by the prefix the title, *denshin kaishu*, or "transmitting the essence," these 15 volumes capture his particular way of interpreting the world around him. From dancing figures and martial artists to animals and architecture, Hokusai's sketches explore each movement and angle, each nail and whisker, each page alive with sparks of inspiration. As a collection of *edehon*, or "picture manuals," the designs were intended as models for other artists to copy in order to emulate Hokusai's distinctive style.

While Hokusai produced many planned drawing manuals during the early 19th century, *Hokusai Manga* had spontaneous origins. During a trip to Nagoya in 1812, it is said that Hokusai's students gathered his demonstrative sketches from a drawing tutorial and assembled them into an informal book. Initially conceived as a ten-volume project, Nagoya-based publisher Eirakuya Toshiro (Tohekido) published the first volume to great success. The following nine were published between 1814 and 1819, while five additional volumes were published to meet the fervent demand for the *Manga*—two during Hokusai's lifetime, three after his death.<sup>40</sup> The series proved so popular that it was reprinted well into the 1870s.<sup>41</sup> *Hokusai Manga* brought Hokusai immense popularity in Japan and beyond. In 1843, Paris Bibliothèque Nationale accessioned volume six from the series. By 1859, *Hokusai Manga* had entranced artists and collectors in France as Japonisme swelled.<sup>42</sup> Today, *Hokusai Manga* continues to inspire artists worldwide.







Date: 1878 (first published 1814-1819, 1834-1878)  
Medium: Woodblock print  
Size: 9" x 6.25"  
Volumes: 15  
Publisher: Katano Toshiro (Tohekido)  
Reference No: JP-209024

40. Matthi Forrer, "Hokusai as an Illustrator of Books: The Artist as Represented in the Pulverer Collection," *The World of the Japanese Illustrated Book: The Gerhard Pulverer Collection*, Smithsonian, 2014, <https://pulverer.si.edu/node/180>.
41. Matthi Forrer, *Hokusai* (Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1991), 20.
42. Timothy Clark, "Late Hokusai," in *Beyond the Great Wave*, ed. Timothy Clark (London: The British Museum/Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2017), 26.





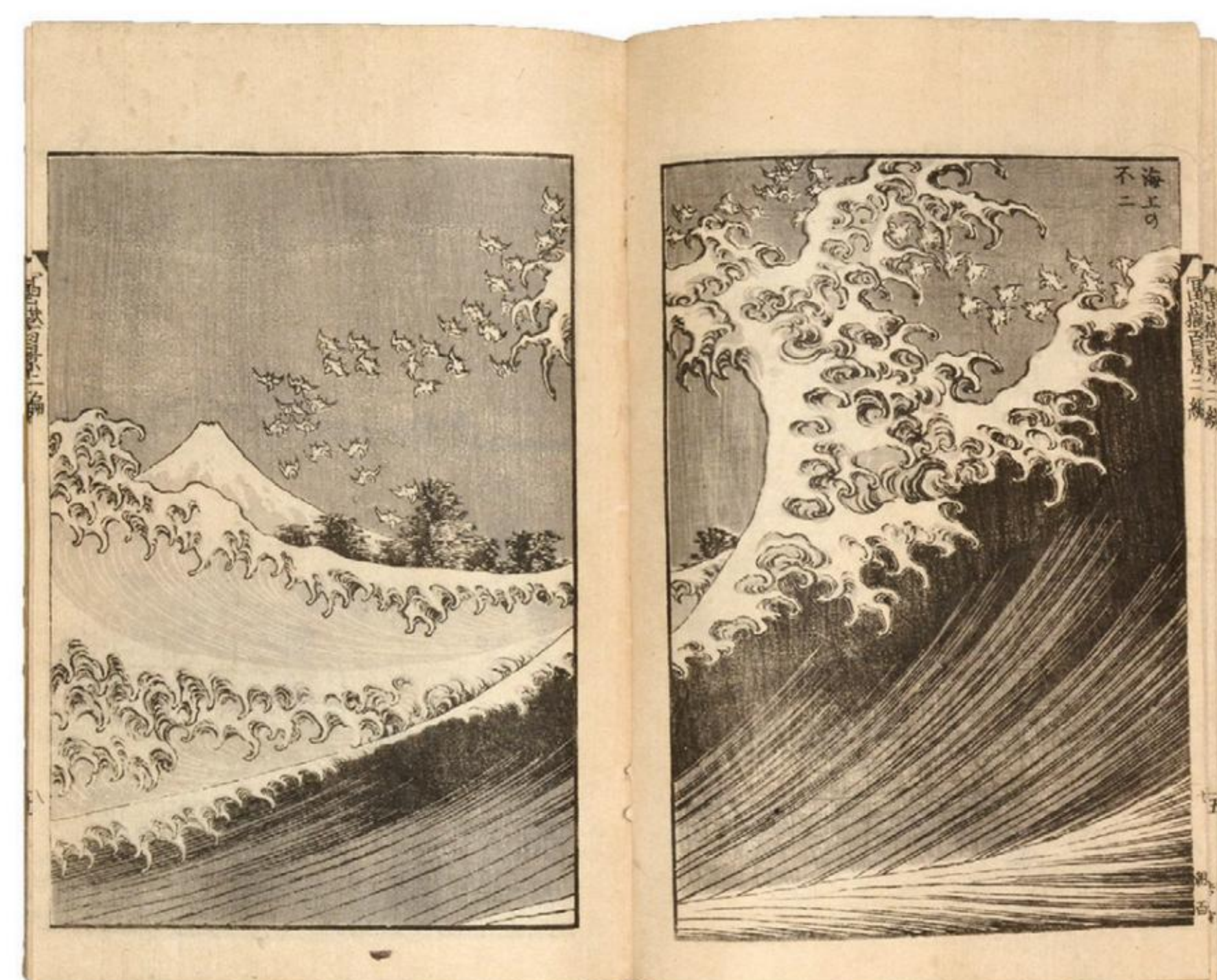


## One Hundred Views of Mt. Fuji

### *Fugaku Hyakkei*

In *One Hundred Views of Mt. Fuji*, Hokusai's designs of this sacred mountain exemplify his genius as a draftsman, his rich imagination, and his exploratory spirit. While *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji* (c. 1830-1833) situates the mountain in the landscape of Japan, *One Hundred Views* explores the mountain in Hokusai's imagination. The first volume opens with the Shinto deity of Mt. Fuji, *Konohananosakuyahime*, "the one who makes the flowers bloom," a sacred mirror in one hand, a branch of the *sakaki* tree in the other. From a coiling dragon beneath the summit, to the aftermath of Mt. Fuji's eruption, each composition explores Mt. Fuji through a fresh lens. To Hokusai, the mountain symbolized longevity, a concept with which he had become fixated. In the colophon to the first volume, Hokusai expresses his fervent desire to reach age one hundred and become a true artist. Working under the name "Manji" at this time, Hokusai incorporated a stylized image of Mt. Fuji into his seal.<sup>43</sup>

This three-volume set is a masterpiece of illustration, both through Hokusai's inventive composition and unfaltering creativity. The block carving for the first two volumes was directed by Egawa Tomekichi, Hokusai's preferred engraver. Nishimuraya Yohachi (Eijudo) published volumes one and two of *One Hundred Views*, however the Nagoya-based publisher Eirakuya Toshiro (Tohekido) published volume three more than a decade later. Though the initial drawings for book three were likely completed in 1834, the third volume was not published until 1849.<sup>44</sup> At that time, Eirakuya

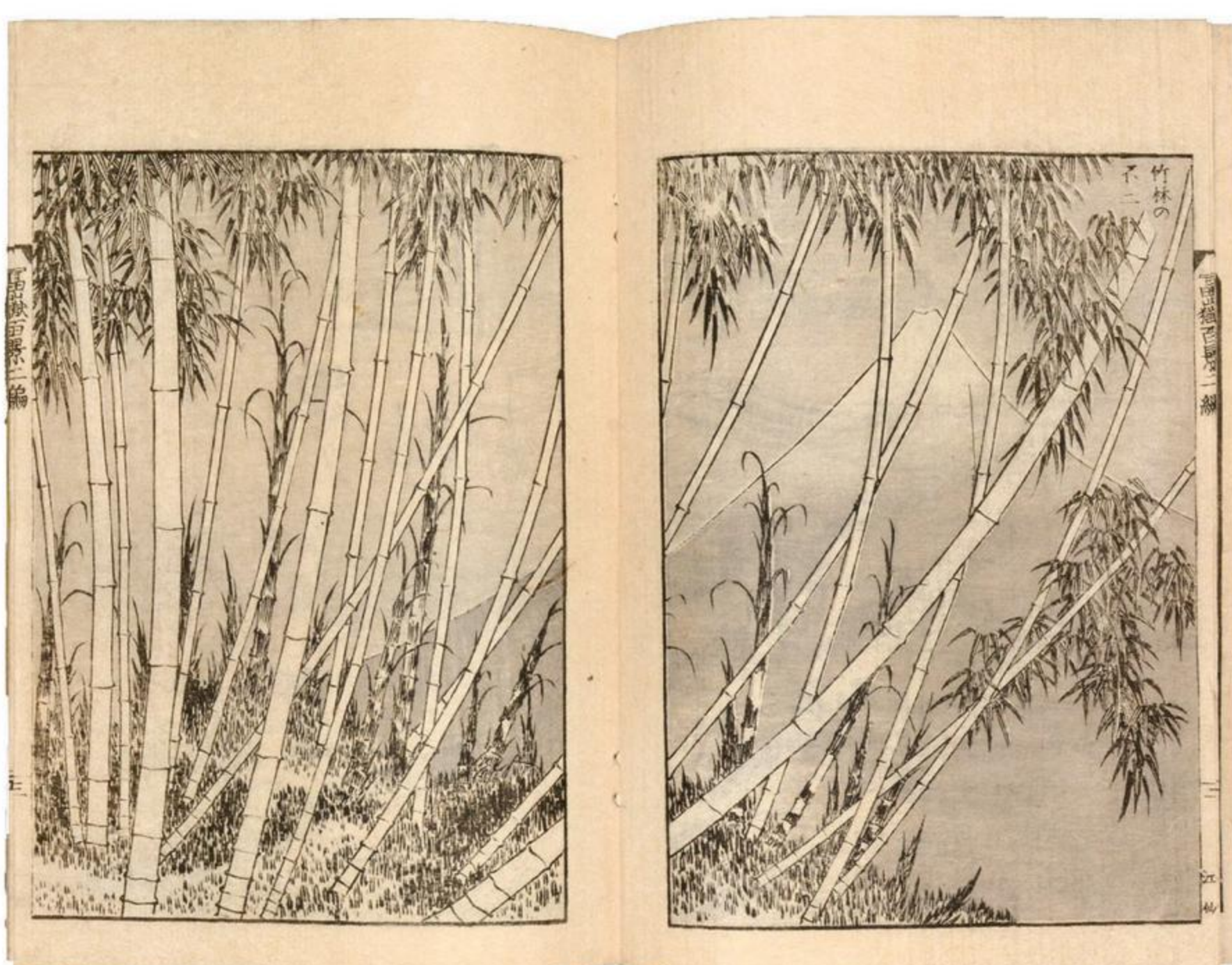


acquired the original woodblocks from Nishimuraya to print complete sets of the series along with the final installment. The most likely explanation for the delay in publication is the financial downturn that struck Edo during the Tenpo famine, as Eijudo faced bankruptcy in 1836. This particular edition of *One Hundred Views of Mt. Fuji* was published in 1875 by Tohekido from the original blocks.

43. Alfred Haft, "Hokusai and Late Tokugawa Society," 75.

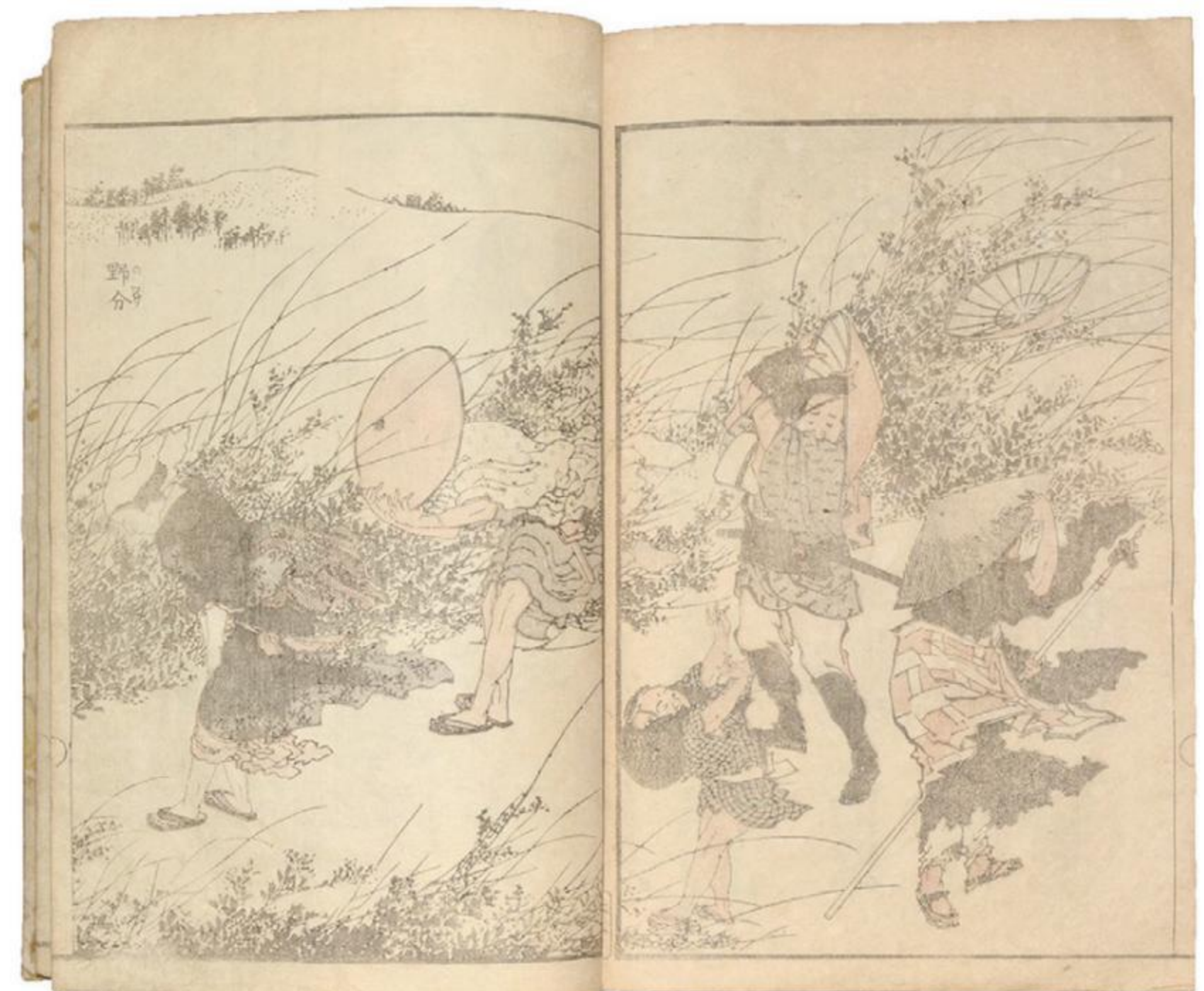
44. Clark, "Late Hokusai," in *Beyond the Great Wave*, ed. Timothy Clark (London: The British Museum/Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2017), 24.





Date: c. 1875 (vol. 1 & 2 first published in 1834-1835, vol. 3 in c.1849)  
Medium: Woodblock print  
Size: 9" x 6.25"  
Volumes: 3  
Publisher: Katano Toshiro (Tohekido)  
Reference No: JP-209023





## Hokusai Soga

*Hokusai Soga* is an *edehon*, a “picture manual,” composed of Hokusai’s rough sketches. From artisans at work to landscapes blanketed in snow, this volume explores complex figural scenes rather than small studies of discrete subjects. Published by Eirakuya Toshiro, Suharaya Mohei, and seven others in 1820, the inviting compositions and expressive figures in *Hokusai Soga*’s double-page illustrations presage the artist’s landscapes and nature studies of the 1830s. For example, in one illustration figures struggle against a sudden gust of wind. As clothing billows, a single hat is carried away. Perhaps this early study informed the composition of “Ejiri in Suruga Province” from *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji* (pg.12). *Hokusai Soga* includes 39 double-page illustrations, two single page images, and a two-page preface. This book can be found in two editions, one printed in pink and grey, the other in black only.

Date: 1820

Medium: Woodblock print

Size: 10.25” x 6.75”

Volumes: 1

Publisher: Eirakuya Toshiro, Suharaya Mohei, Suharaya Ihachi, Okadaya Kashichi, Nishimura Yohachi, Tsuruya Kiemon, Kadomaruya Jinsuke, Maekawa Rokuzaemon, and Osakaya Mokichi.

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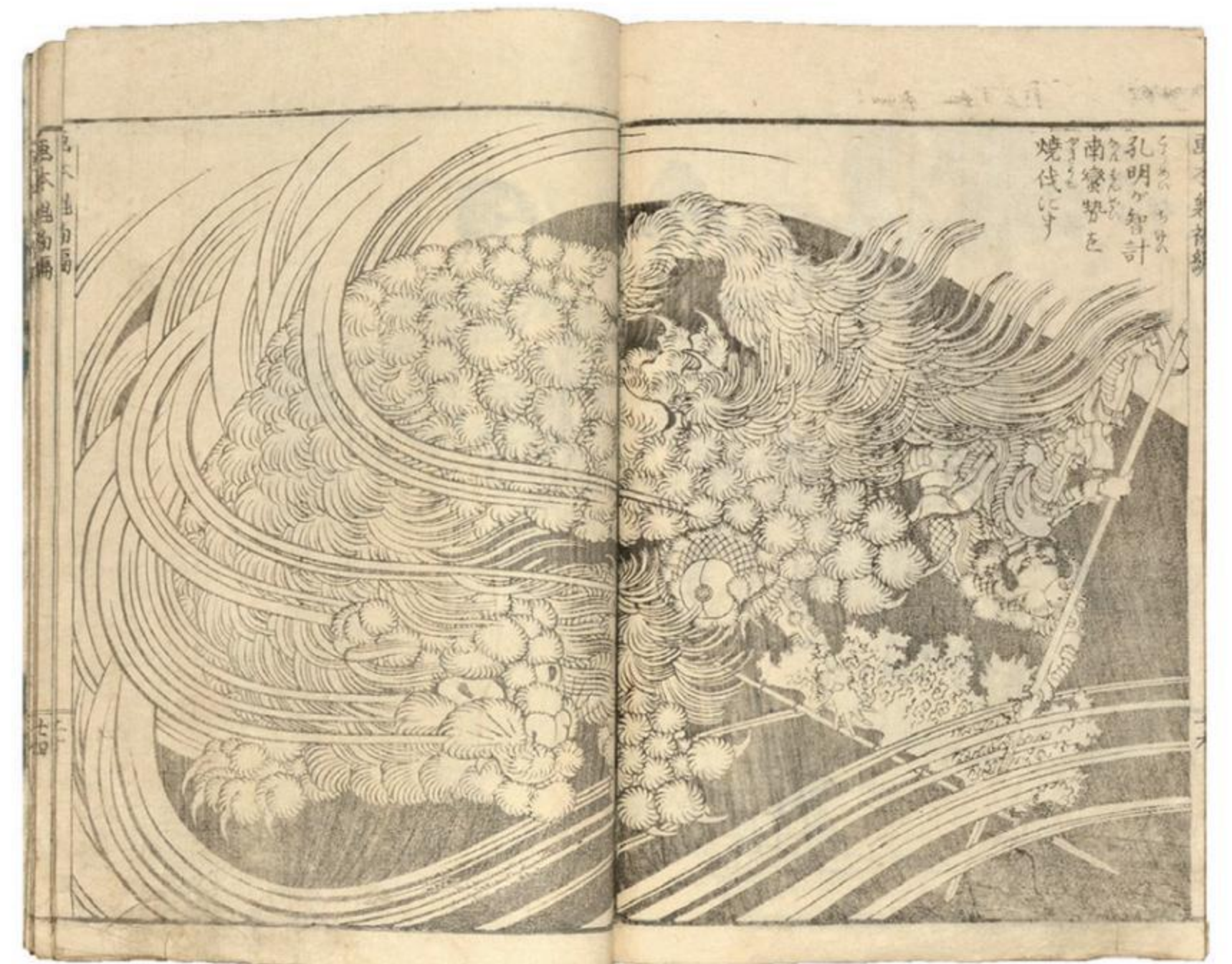


## Picture Book of Chinese and Japanese Warriors

*Wakan Ehon Sakigake Shohen*

Though the informal drawing manuals of *Hokusai Manga* are certainly the best known of Hokusai's sketches, Hokusai produced many *edehon*, or "picture manuals." In *Picture Book of Chinese and Japanese Warriors*, Hokusai demonstrates how to dynamically depict famous heroes across double-page illustrations. Published in 1836 by Akitaya Taemon and five others, this drawing manual showed other artists how to evoke drama and build suspense when illustrating the legendary. This dynamism is exemplified in Hokusai's depiction of Mongaku Shonin (bottom right). Fingers interlocked, the priest stands in penance beneath the waterfall after accidentally killing the woman he loved. Hokusai conveys the strength of the falls as the water breaks against the figure, as well as the fortitude of Mongaku, brows furrowed and perfectly still beneath the torrent.

Date: 1836  
 Medium: Woodblock print  
 Size: 8.75" x 6"  
 Volume: 1  
 Publisher: Akitaya Taemon, Eirakuya Toshiro,  
 Izumiya Ichibei, Okadaya Kashichi, Komura  
 Shinbei, and Nishinomiya Yahei.  
 Reference No: JPR-209021





# Glossary

## ***Aizuri-e***

“blue printed pictures;” a genre of prints created through only or predominantly blue pigments—typically Prussian blue and indigo.

## ***Edehon***

“picture manuals;” category of painting manuals, provided model drawings for other artists to copy.

## ***Ebon***

“illustrated books.”

## ***Egoyomi***

“picture calendars;” genre of print with a calendar information included within the image.

## ***Go***

“artist name;” many artists worked under a variety of names throughout their career.

## ***Hanshita-e***

block-ready drawing for a woodblock print that would be given to the engraver during the woodblock printing process.

## ***Kacho-ga***

“bird-and-flower pictures;” genre of nature studies.

## ***Kibyoshi***

popular illustrated fiction published from the late 18th to early 19th century, identifiable by yellow covers.

## ***Kyoka***

“comic poetry” or “crazy verse;” form of poetry filled with word play, parodies, and puns that flourished during the Edo period (1603-1868).

## ***Kyoka-ren***

“comic poetry associations;” social organizations that were frequent patrons of surimono designers.

## ***Meisho-e***

“famous place pictures;” genre of famous locations and views.

## ***Nagaoban***

elongated print format measuring roughly 20.25” x 9.”

## ***Surimono***

privately commissioned prints, often produced in small sizes and printed with lavish materials and techniques.

## ***Shunga***

“spring pictures;” genre of erotic prints.

## ***Ukiyo-e***

“pictures of the floating world;” art form capturing the pleasure driven, merchant-class culture that flourished in Edo during the Edo period (1603-1868).



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David Libertson  
President

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